CRIME
NO. 2
DEC-JAN
10¢
CRIME SUSPENSTORIES
FEATURING A NEW TREND IN MAGAZINES...
STARTLING TALES OF TENSION!
PLEASE...PLEASE DON'T HIT ME! YOU'RE MAKING A MISTAKE! I'M A DEAD RINGER FOR THE GUY YOU'RE AFTER...BUT HE'S DEAD! I KILLED HIM!
NAH! YOU THOUGHT YOU KILLED ME! I'LL LET THOSE PUNKS KNOCK YOU OFF IN MY PLACE, PAL! THEN I'LL STEP IN AND BLAST THEM!
GRAIG
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ORIGINAL EC COMICS FROM THE 1950s!

NO. 2
FEB

CRIME SUSPENSTORIES

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CANADA

FEATURING A NEW TREND IN MAGAZINES...

STARTLING TALES OF TENSION!

PLEASE...*PLEASE* DON'T HIT ME! YOU'RE MAKING A *MISTAKE!* I'M A *DEAD RINGER* FOR THE GUY YOU'RE AFTER... BUT *HE'S DEAD!* I *KILLED HIM!*
HAH! YOU *THOUGHT* YOU KILLED ME! I'LL LET THOSE PUNKS KNOCK *YOU* OFF IN *MY* PLACE, PAL! THEN *I'LL* STEP IN AND BLAST *THEM!*
JOHNNY CRAIG

DEAD-RINGER

NO! NO! DON'T KILL ME! (SOB!) PLEASE! GIMME A CHANCE! LISTEN TO ME! LISTEN TO MY STORY!
JOHNNY CRAIG

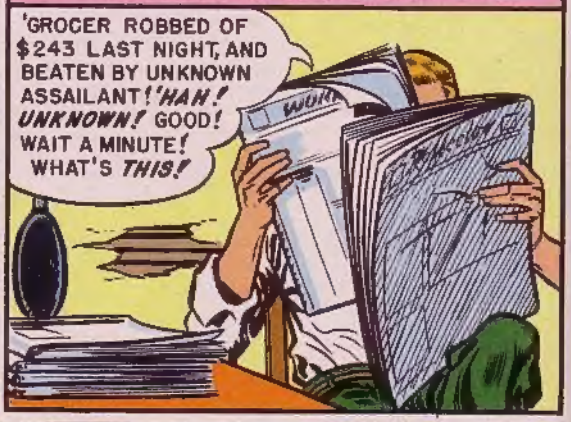
I... I GUESS I WAS JUST BORN UNLUCKY! NEVER HAD A CHANCE TO MAKE ANYTHING OF MYSELF! I WAS POOR...FROM A POOR FAMILY... TOUGH NEIGHBORHOOD!

MOST OF THE OTHER GUYS I KNEW WERE ABLE TO RISE ABOVE THEIR ENVIRONMENT AND MAKE SOMETHING OF THEMSELVES...BUT ME... I DIDN'T HAVE THE GUTS! I CHOSE THE 'EASY' WAY!

ONE NIGHT I KNOCKED OVER A GROCERY STORE! I HAD THE JOINT CASED...EVERYTHING WENT OFF SMOOTHLY...

IT WAS THE BIGGEST JOB I'D EVER PULLED! THE SHOP OWNER GAVE ME A LITTLE TROUBLE WHEN HE BARGED IN ON ME, BUT I TOOK CARE OF HIM AND LAMMED!

I WAS PRETTY SCARED AFTER IT WAS ALL OVER, AND I HOLED UP IN SOME CHEAP HOTEL TO HIDE OUT. THAT WAS HOW IT STARTED. I BOUGHT EVERY NEWSPAPER IN TOWN, THE NEXT DAY...



'MILLIONAIRE VICTIM OF AMNESIA! RESTING AT SANEVILLE SANITARIUM! CHARLES ROBERTS, WEALTHY BANKER...' HOLY SMOKES! THIS PICTURE OF HIM! HE...

...HE LOOKS JUST LIKE ME!

BOY! A MILLIONAIRE... A *DEAD RINGER* FOR *ME!* WHAT I WOULDN'T GIVE TO BE IN HIS PLACE... AMNESIA OR NOT! SAY-Y... WHY NOT?

WITH HIM HAVING AMNESIA, I KNOW AS MUCH ABOUT HIM AND HIS BACKGROUND AS *HE* DOES! I CAN EVEN KNOW *MORE* BY READING UP ON HIM! HMMM...

THE IDEA INTRIGUED ME! THE MORE I THOUGHT ABOUT IT, THE MORE I LIKED IT! BUT, TO TAKE THE PLACE OF MILLIONAIRE CHARLES ROBERTS WOULD MEAN *KILLING* HIM! WAS IT WORTH THE RISK?

Reflecto

MILLIONA VICTIM OF NESIA!

THAT NIGHT I WENT TO SANEVILLE AND SNEAKED INSIDE THE SANITARIUM GROUNDS TO CASE THE PLACE.

BLAZES! HE *DOES* LOOK EXACTLY LIKE ME! LIKE WE WERE *TWINS!* WHAT A SET-UP!

IT TOOK SEVERAL NIGHTS TO PLAN THE CAPER... AND I NEEDED TIME TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO GO THROUGH WITH IT...

GOES TO BED AT TEN... NO ONE BOTHERS HIM TILL MORNING. GIVES ME *PLENTY* OF TIME! ROOM'S ON THE GROUND FLOOR...

I'D... I'D NEVER KILLED BEFORE! I WAS A LITTLE FRIGHTENED... BUT I WANTED TO TAKE HIS PLACE IN LIFE! ONE NIGHT I DECIDED TO MAKE MY MOVE...

I MADE MY LAST TRIP TO THE SANITARIUM. IT WAS AFTER MIDNIGHT WHEN I CLIMBED THE WALL AND CAUTIOUSLY EDGED UP TO HIS WINDOW...

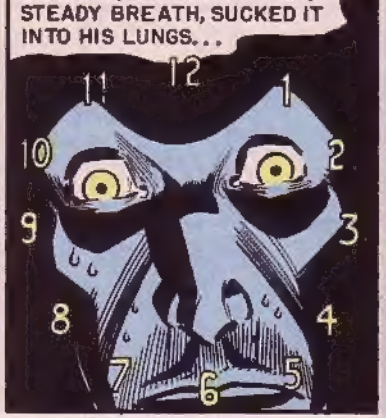
I TREMBLED VIOLENTLY, AS SLOWLY... INCH BY INCH... I RAISED THE WINDOW. THE MINUTES SEEMED TO FLY PAST AND I WORRIED ABOUT WHETHER I WOULD HAVE ENOUGH TIME...

I CLIMBED INTO THE ROOM. I WAS BREATHING HEAVILY... IT SOUNDED LOUD ENOUGH TO WAKE THE DEAD! BUT THE FIGURE IN BED REMAINED MOTIONLESS.

I PULLED CHLOROFORM AND A RAG FROM MY POCKET... AND EDGED TOWARD THE BED. SLOWLY... SLOWLY, I MOVED...

THEN I WAS BESIDE HIM! MY HAND, A LEADEN WEIGHT, SOAKED THE RAG AND I HELD IT ABOVE HIS FACE...

I STOOD THERE WHILE THE FUMES OF CHLOROFORM FILLED THE ROOM... WHILE THE MILLIONAIRE, WITH EACH DEEP, STEADY BREATH, SUCKED IT INTO HIS LUNGS...



I... I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG IT TOOK. TIME WAS A CRAZILY MOVING THING THAT NIGHT. AFTER WHAT SEEMED AN ENDLESS NIGHTMARE, I LIFTED HIS BODY TO MY BACK AND TOTED HIM AWAY...

DEEP... DEEP INTO THE SURROUNDING WOODS OF THE SANITARIUM I CARRIED HIM, TO A PLACE I HAD CHOSEN PREVIOUSLY. TOOLS WERE THERE AND I SET TO WORK... DIGGING A MILLIONAIRE'S GRAVE!

I WORKED FEVERISHLY! DEEPER AND DEEPER I DUG INTO THE EARTH! I WANTED MILLIONAIRE CHARLES ROBERTS SO DEEP, THE WORLD WOULD *NEVER* FIND HIM!

THERE! (GASP!) THAT'S DEEP ENOUGH! NOW... TO THROW HIM IN!

I CHANGED CLOTHES WITH HIM AND DROPPED HIM INTO THE YAWNING PIT. HE LANDED WITH A MUFFLED *THUD* AND I PILED THE DIRT IN ON TOP OF HIM!

... GOT TO HURRY! *HURRY! GOT TO HURRY!*

I...I RACED MADLY BACK TO THE SANITARIUM AND SLIPPED INTO BED! TRACES OF CHLOROFORM STILL LINGERED, BUT THEY WOULD DISPERSE BY THE TIME MORNING CAME...

AN HOUR TO GO! *AN HOUR TO GO!* (GASP!) HAVE I MADE ANY MISTAKES? *GOT TO THINK!*

WOULD THEY KNOW I WASN'T THE *REAL* CHARLES ROBERTS? WOULD THEY DISCOVER WHAT I HAD DONE? WOULD THEY? *WOULD THEY?*

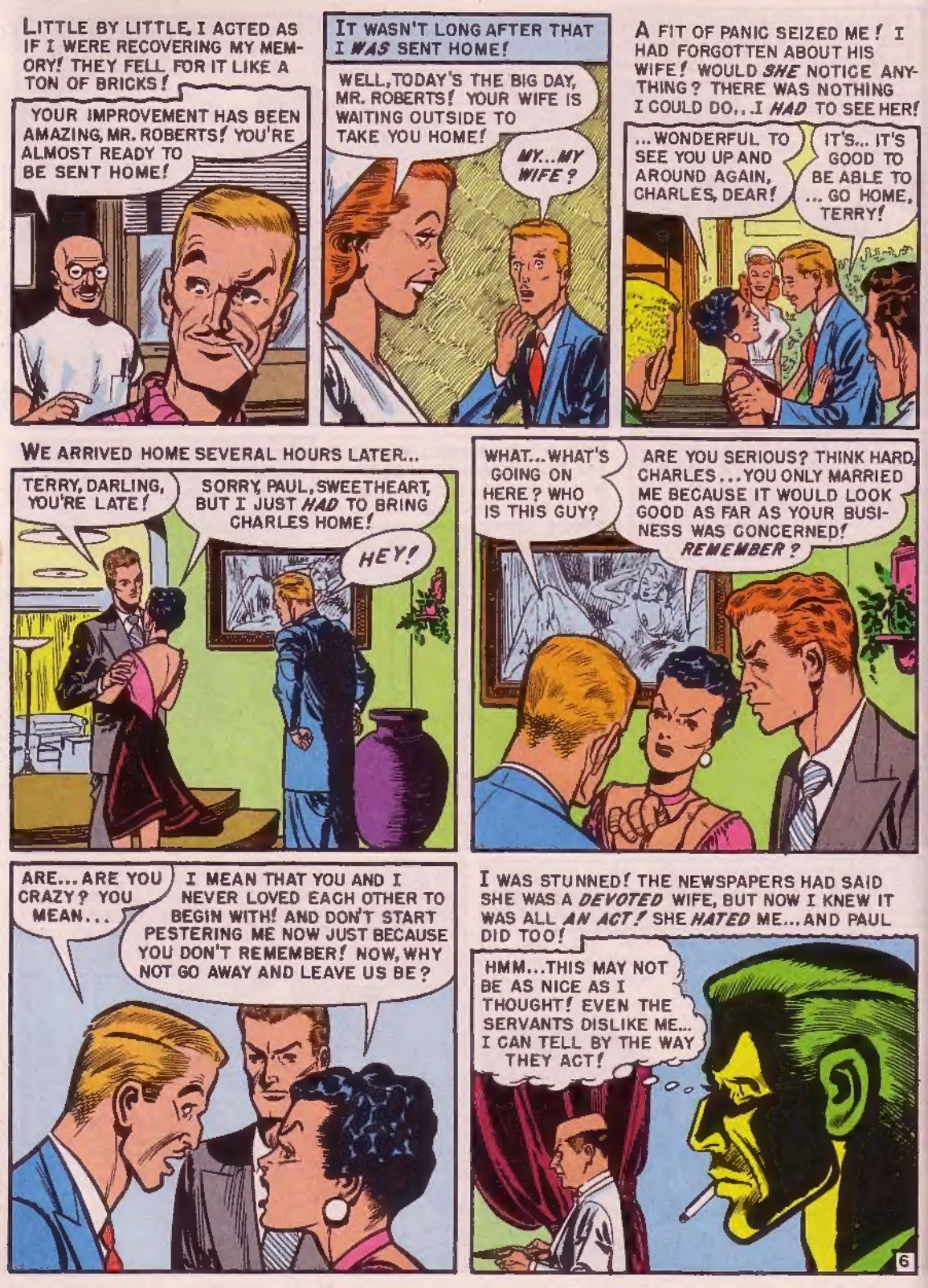
SOUNDS OF MOVEMENTS CAME FROM THE CORRIDOR OUTSIDE THE ROOM WHILE I WAITED... HARDLY DARING TO BREATHE... FOR THE CRUCIAL MOMENT TO ARRIVE. *SUDDENLY THE DOOR WAS FLUNG OPEN!*

WE STARED AT EACH OTHER...AND A MILLION GRUESOME THOUGHTS RACED THROUGH MY MIND ALL AT ONCE! WHY DIDN'T SHE *SAY* SOMETHING?

MORNING, MR. ROBERTS! DID I STARTLE YOU?

WH...ER, AH...YES...YES, YOU DID! GOOD...GOOD MORNING...

I HAD PASSED THE TEST! I ALMOST COLLAPSED WITH RELIEF! I WENT THROUGH THE ENTIRE DAY WITHOUT MISHAP. OH, I MADE A *FEW* BONERS, BUT NO ONE NOTICED ANYTHING WRONG. THAT NIGHT I DREAMED OF THE BEAUTIFUL FUTURE...


LITTLE BY LITTLE, I ACTED AS IF I WERE RECOVERING MY MEMORY! THEY FELL FOR IT LIKE A TON OF BRICKS!
YOUR IMPROVEMENT HAS BEEN AMAZING, MR. ROBERTS! YOU'RE ALMOST READY TO BE SENT HOME!
IT WASN'T LONG AFTER THAT I WAS SENT HOME!
WELL, TODAY'S THE BIG DAY, MR. ROBERTS! YOUR WIFE IS WAITING OUTSIDE TO TAKE YOU HOME!
MY...MY WIFE?
A FIT OF PANIC SEIZED ME! I HAD FORGOTTEN ABOUT HIS WIFE! WOULD SHE NOTICE ANYTHING? THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO...I HAD TO SEE HER!
...WONDERFUL TO SEE YOU UP AND AROUND AGAIN, CHARLES, DEAR!
IT'S... IT'S GOOD TO BE ABLE TO ... GO HOME, TERRY!
WE ARRIVED HOME SEVERAL HOURS LATER...
TERRY, DARLING, YOU'RE LATE!
SORRY, PAUL, SWEETHEART, BUT I JUST HAD TO BRING CHARLES HOME!
HEY!
WHAT...WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? WHO IS THIS GUY?
ARE YOU SERIOUS? THINK HARD, CHARLES...YOU ONLY MARRIED ME BECAUSE IT WOULD LOOK GOOD AS FAR AS YOUR BUSINESS WAS CONCERNED! REMEMBER?
ARE...ARE YOU CRAZY? YOU MEAN...
I MEAN THAT YOU AND I NEVER LOVED EACH OTHER TO BEGIN WITH! AND DON'T START PESTERING ME NOW JUST BECAUSE YOU DON'T REMEMBER! NOW, WHY NOT GO AWAY AND LEAVE US BE?
I WAS STUNNED! THE NEWSPAPERS HAD SAID SHE WAS A DEVOTED WIFE, BUT NOW I KNEW IT WAS ALL AN ACT! SHE HATED ME...AND PAUL DID TOO!
HMM...THIS MAY NOT BE AS NICE AS I THOUGHT! EVEN THE SERVANTS DISLIKE ME... I CAN TELL BY THE WAY THEY ACT!
6

WHAT HAD THE REAL CHARLES ROBERTS BEEN LIKE? EVERYWHERE I WENT, I DETECTED A SEETHING TIDE OF HATE!
THE DEVIL WITH THEM! I CAN HAVE ANYTHING I WANT! THE DEVIL WITH THEM ALL!
ONE DAY I DECIDED TO VISIT MY OFFICE. MY BUSINESS PARTNERS WERE THERE WHEN I ARRIVED...
WELL, GENTLEMEN! IT'S WONDERFUL TO BE BACK ON THE JOB! YES, SIR! LET ME TELL...
OH, SHUT UP, CHARLES! WE HAVE ENOUGH TROUBLES WITHOUT LISTENING TO YOU!
TROUBLES? WHA...WHAT? I... I DON'T UNDERSTAND!
YOU UNDERSTAND, ALL RIGHT, YOU CHEAP LIAR!
IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT! WE SHOULD NEVER HAVE TRUSTED YOU IN THE FIRST PLACE!
WE FOUND OUT HOW YOU'VE BEEN CHEATING INNOCENT PEOPLE OF THEIR LIFE'S SAVINGS BY POCKETING THE MONEY INSTEAD OF INVESTING IT FOR THEM!
YOU'RE LUCKY WE'RE NOT SENDING YOU TO JAIL!
WE'VE MADE GOOD EVERY CLAIM AGAINST US, CHARLES! AND WE USED YOUR CAPITAL TO DO IT!
YOU'RE BROKE! YOU HAVEN'T A RED CENT AND YOU'RE IN DEBT UP TO YOUR EARS!
WHAT HAD I STEPPED INTO? HERE I THOUGHT I WOULD BE SITTING ON TOP OF THE WORLD... AND NOW I WAS WORSE OFF THAN BEFORE! I LEFT THE OFFICE... BEGAN WALKING THE STREETS, WHEN...
DON'T MOVE, ROBERTS! I HAVE A GUN IN YOUR BACK!
WHA...WHAT'S GOING ON? WHAT DO YOU WANT?
THE CAR STANDING AT THE CURB... GET IN!
I SAT IN THE BACK SEAT, AN ARMED MAN ON EITHER SIDE, WHILE A THIRD DROVE US OUT OF THE CITY ALONG LONELY COUNTRY ROADS...
YOU DON'T KNOW WHO WE ARE ROBERTS, BUT OUR DAD COMMITTED SUICIDE BECAUSE YOU SWINDLED HIM OUT OF EVERY CENT HE OWNED! TONIGHT WE'RE GOING TO PAY YOU BACK... IN FULL!
7

GOOD LORD! THEY'RE GOING TO KILL ME! WHAT'LL I DO? I CAN'T TELL THEM WHO I REALLY AM! I'LL GET THE CHAIR FOR KILLING ROBERTS!
...BUT IF I DON'T TELL... I'LL DIE... RIGHT NOW!
THIS PLACE IS AS GOOD AS ANY, MIKE.
IF I TELL, MAYBE I'LL BE ABLE TO BEAT THE RAP! AT LEAST I'LL HAVE A CHANCE! (SOB!) I DON'T WANT TO DIE!
OKAY, ROBERTS. GET OUT...
LISTEN, FELLAS, YOU GOT THE WRONG GUY! I'M NOT THE ONE YOU WANT! LISTEN TO ME!
YOU GONNA DO IT, RALPH?
YEAH!
NO! NO! DON'T KILL ME! (SOB!) PLEASE! GIMME A CHANCE! YOU HEARD MY STORY! YOU BELIEVE ME, DON'TCHA?!
DON'TCHA?
BLAM!
HEY... AH... YOU BELIEVE ALL THAT STUFF HE TOLD US?
NAH! EVEN IF IT WAS TRUE... HE'S A DEAD-RINGER, NOW!
-THE END-

READ THIS STORY, AND LEARN WHAT HORRORS A MAN CAN COMMIT IN... A

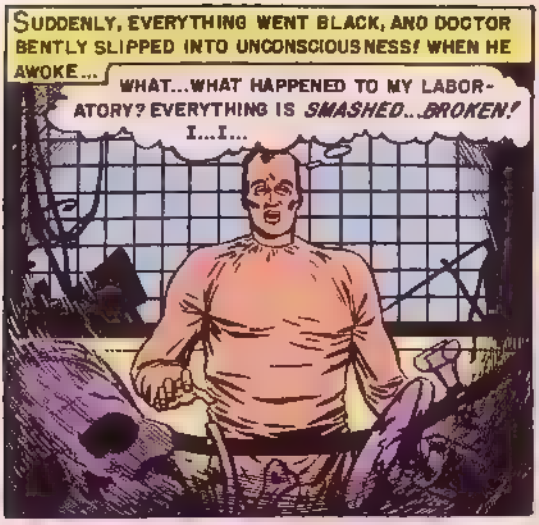
MOMENT of MADNESS!

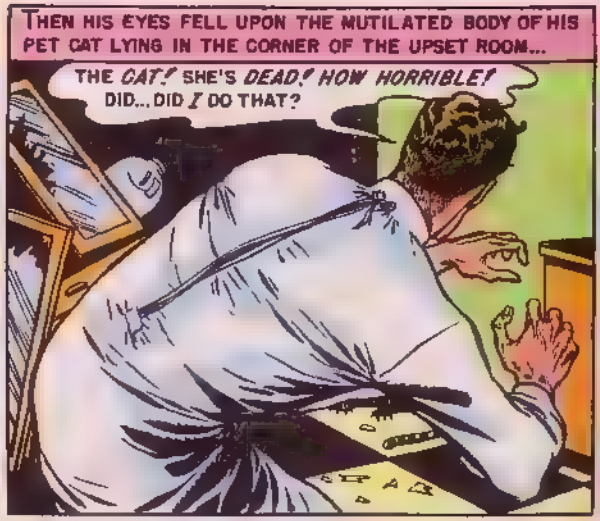
THE LIGHTS IN THE GLEAMING WHITE-TILED OPERATING ROOM GLARED DOWN ON DOCTOR RALPH BENTLY... THE MEDICAL PROFESSION'S MOST NOTED BRAIN SURGEON... AS HE BENT OVER THE STILL FORM ON THE TABLE...

...MUST HURRY... FEEL GROGGY... ANOTHER ATTACK COMING ON! MUST FINISH... BEFORE...

AS DOCTOR BENTLY... SCALPEL IN HAND... LEANED FORWARD, HIS THOUGHTS WENT BACK TO THAT FATEFUL DAY WHEN HE HAD HAD HIS *FIRST* ATTACK! HE HAD BEEN WORKING IN HIS LABORATORY, WHEN...

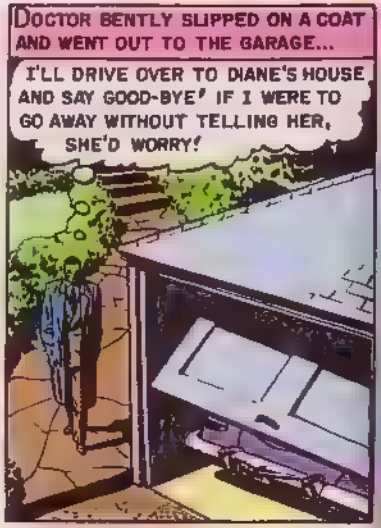
STRANGE? I FEEL A LITTLE DIZZY! I...I THINK I'M GOING... TO... FAINT...

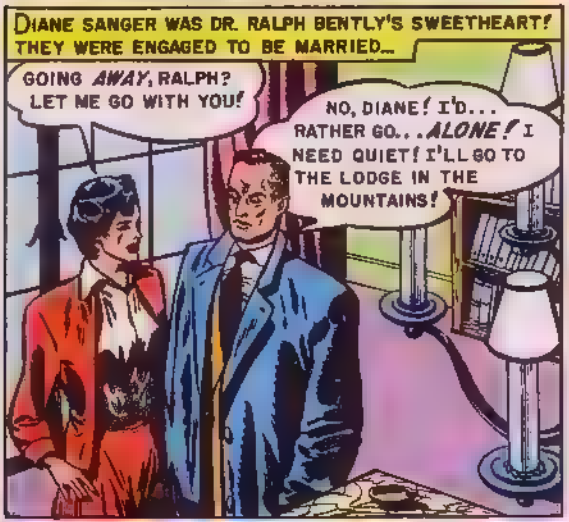

SUDDENLY, EVERYTHING WENT BLACK, AND DOCTOR BENTLY SLIPPED INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS! WHEN HE AWOKE...
WHAT...WHAT HAPPENED TO MY LABORATORY? EVERYTHING IS SMASHED...BROKEN! I...I...


THEN HIS EYES FELL UPON THE MUTILATED BODY OF HIS PET CAT LYING IN THE CORNER OF THE UPSET ROOM...
THE CAT! SHE'S DEAD! HOW HORRIBLE! DID...DID I DO THAT?

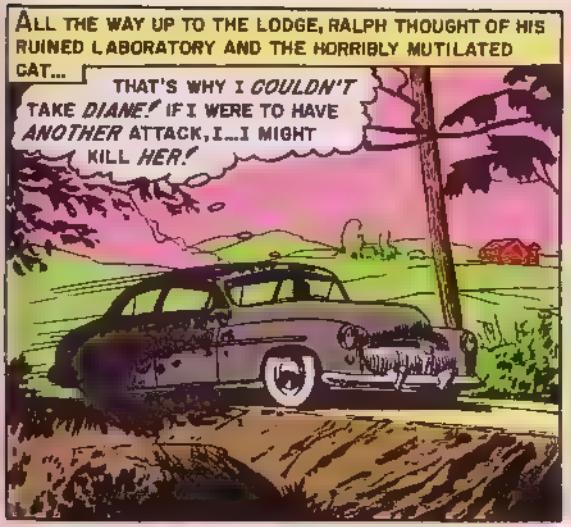
DOCTOR BENTLY LOOKED ABOUT! HIS EYES SCANNED THE RUINED LABORATORY...
I MUST HAVE GONE MAD FOR A MOMENT...WRECKED THE PLACE...AND KILLED THE CAT...

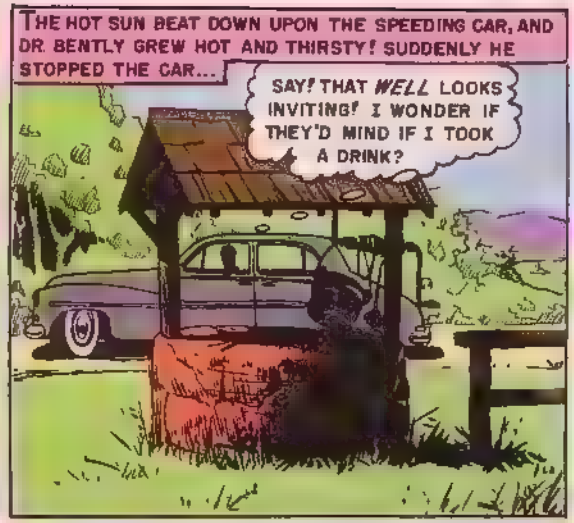
HE SLUMPED INTO A CHAIR...
I...I'VE BEEN WORKING TOO HARD LATELY! I NEED A REST! I'M ON THE VERGE OF A MENTAL BREAKDOWN! I'LL HAVE TO GO AWAY FOR A WHILE!

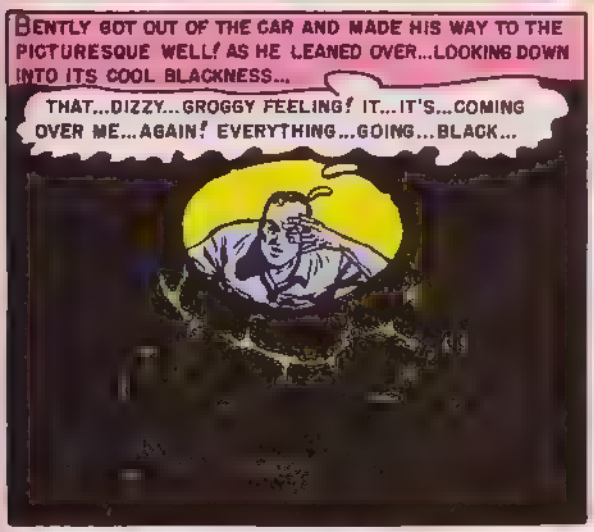

DOCTOR BENTLY SLIPPED ON A COAT AND WENT OUT TO THE GARAGE...
I'LL DRIVE OVER TO DIANE'S HOUSE AND SAY GOOD-BYE! IF I WERE TO GO AWAY WITHOUT TELLING HER, SHE'D WORRY!

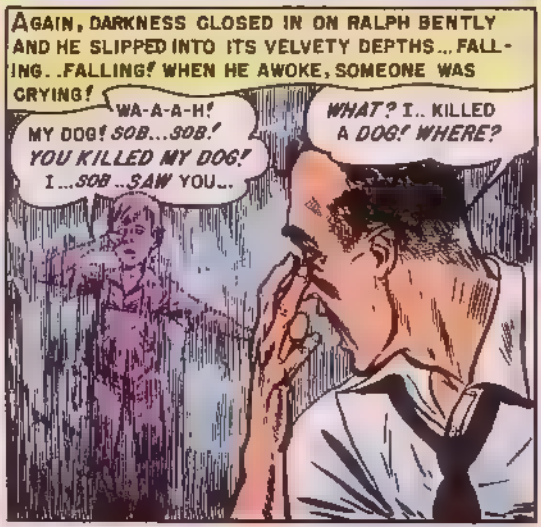

DIANE SANGER WAS DR. RALPH BENTLY'S SWEETHEART! THEY WERE ENGAGED TO BE MARRIED...
GOING AWAY, RALPH? LET ME GO WITH YOU!
NO, DIANE! I'D... RATHER GO...ALONE! I NEED QUIET! I'LL GO TO THE LODGE IN THE MOUNTAINS!

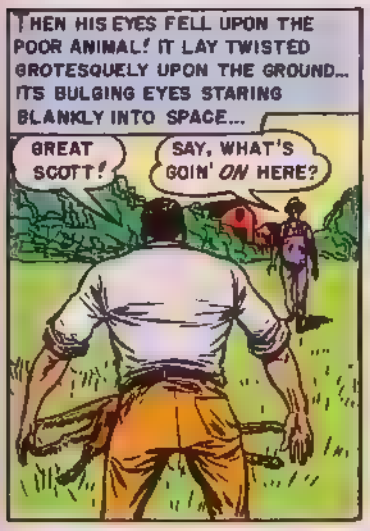
IS THERE ANYTHING WRONG? YOU LOOK VERY PALE!
NO, DIANE! THERE'S NOTHING WRONG! I'LL SEE YOU IN A WEEK OR SO! GOOD-BYE!


ALL THE WAY UP TO THE LODGE, RALPH THOUGHT OF HIS RUINED LABORATORY AND THE HORRIBLY MUTILATED CAT...
THAT'S WHY I COULDN'T TAKE DIANE! IF I WERE TO HAVE ANOTHER ATTACK, I...I MIGHT KILL HER!

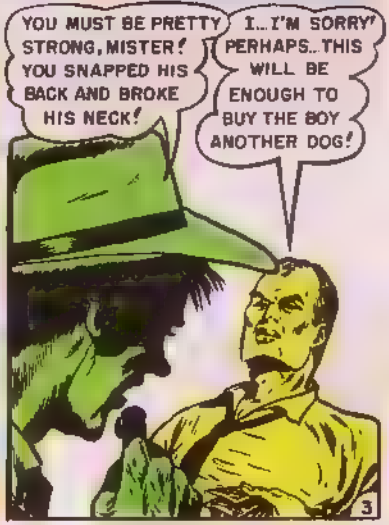

THE HOT SUN BEAT DOWN UPON THE SPEEDING CAR, AND DR. BENTLY GREW HOT AND THIRSTY! SUDDENLY HE STOPPED THE CAR...
SAY! THAT WELL LOOKS INVITING! I WONDER IF THEY'D MIND IF I TOOK A DRINK?

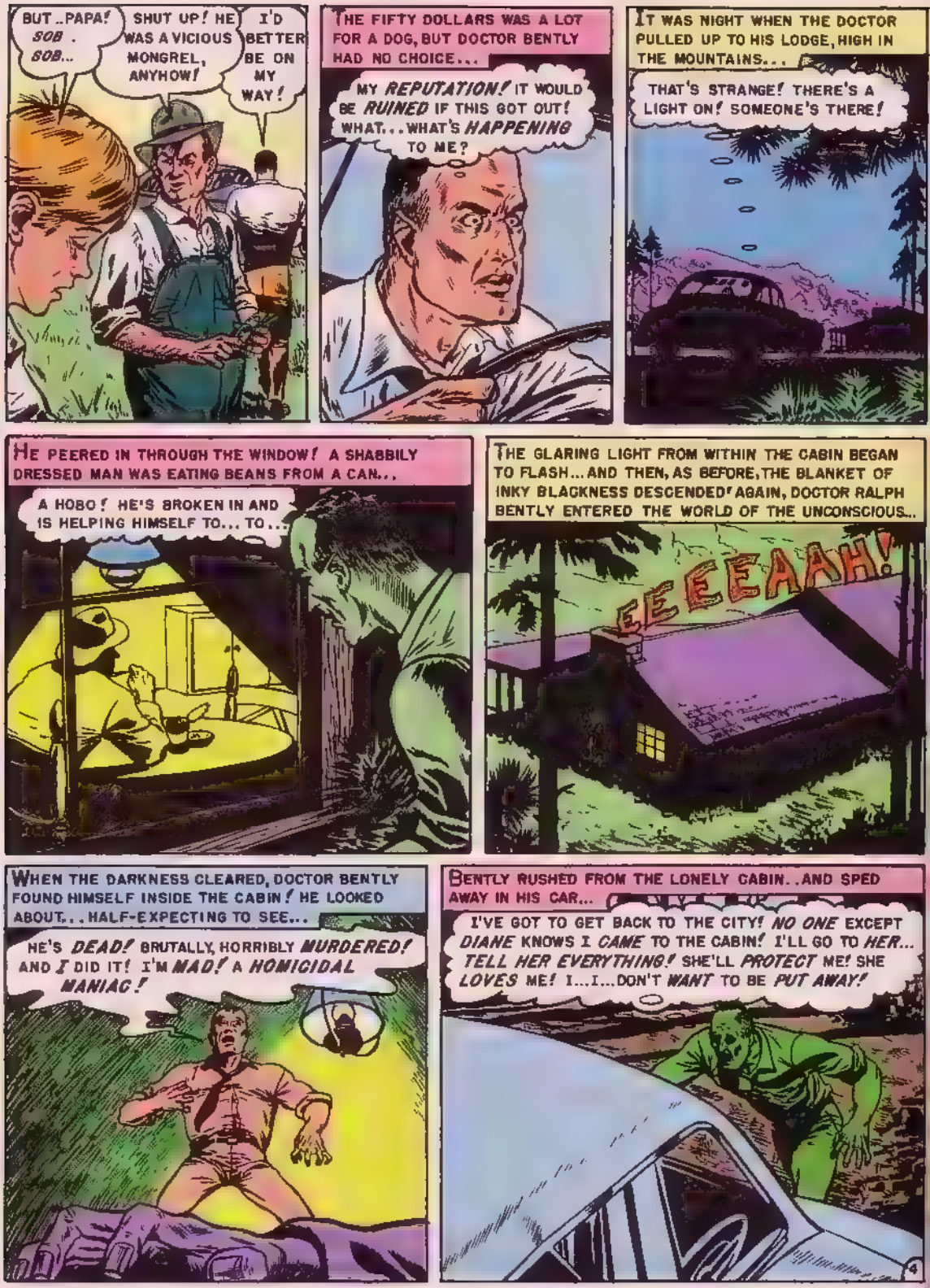

BENTLY GOT OUT OF THE CAR AND MADE HIS WAY TO THE PICTURESQUE WELL! AS HE LEANED OVER...LOOKING DOWN INTO ITS COOL BLACKNESS...
THAT...DIZZY...GROGGY FEELING! IT...IT'S...COMING OVER ME...AGAIN! EVERYTHING...GOING...BLACK...


AGAIN, DARKNESS CLOSED IN ON RALPH BENTLY AND HE SLIPPED INTO ITS VELVETY DEPTHS... FALLING..FALLING! WHEN HE AWOKE, SOMEONE WAS CRYING!
WA-A-A-H! MY DOG! SOB...SOB! YOU KILLED MY DOG! I...SOB...SAW YOU...
WHAT? I.. KILLED A DOG! WHERE?

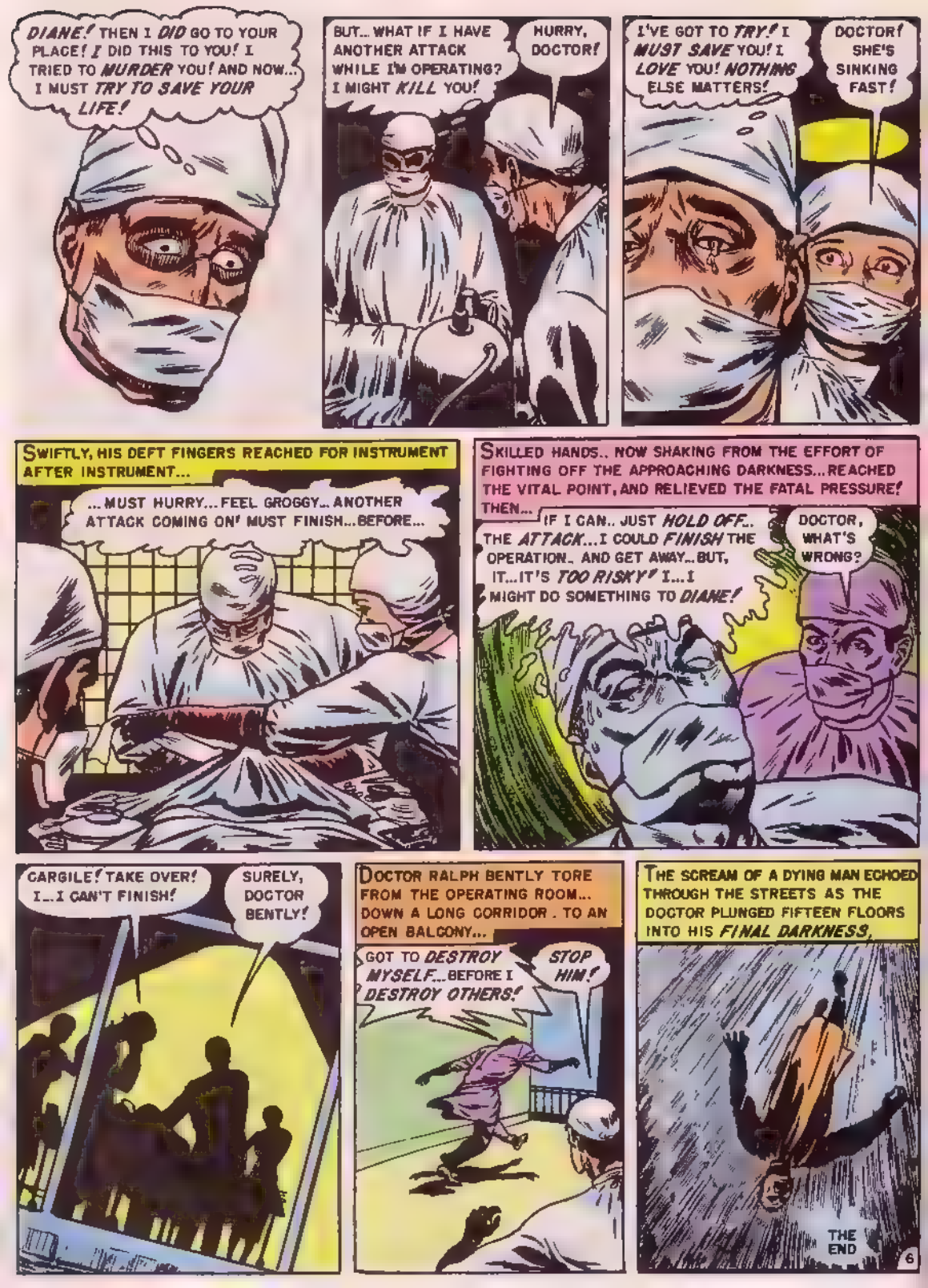

THEN HIS EYES FELL UPON THE POOR ANIMAL! IT LAY TWISTED GROTESQUELY UPON THE GROUND... ITS BULGING EYES STARING BLANKLY INTO SPACE...
GREAT SCOTT!
SAY, WHAT'S GOIN' ON HERE?

MY DOG, PAPA! HE KILLED... SOB... MY DOG!
HE...HE ATTACKED ME! I...I FOUGHT HIM OFF!


YOU MUST BE PRETTY STRONG, MISTER! YOU SNAPPED HIS BACK AND BROKE HIS NECK!
I...I'M SORRY! PERHAPS...THIS WILL BE ENOUGH TO BUY THE BOY ANOTHER DOG!


BUT..PAPA! SOB . SOB...
SHUT UP! HE WAS A VICIOUS MONGREL, ANYHOW!
I'D BETTER BE ON MY WAY!
THE FIFTY DOLLARS WAS A LOT FOR A DOG, BUT DOCTOR BENTLY HAD NO CHOICE...
MY REPUTATION! IT WOULD BE RUINED IF THIS GOT OUT! WHAT...WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME?
IT WAS NIGHT WHEN THE DOCTOR PULLED UP TO HIS LODGE, HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS...
THAT'S STRANGE! THERE'S A LIGHT ON! SOMEONE'S THERE!
HE PEERED IN THROUGH THE WINDOW! A SHABBILY DRESSED MAN WAS EATING BEANS FROM A CAN...
A HOBO! HE'S BROKEN IN AND IS HELPING HIMSELF TO... TO...
THE GLARING LIGHT FROM WITHIN THE CABIN BEGAN TO FLASH...AND THEN, AS BEFORE, THE BLANKET OF INKY BLACKNESS DESCENDED AGAIN, DOCTOR RALPH BENTLY ENTERED THE WORLD OF THE UNCONSCIOUS...
EEEEAAH!
WHEN THE DARKNESS CLEARED, DOCTOR BENTLY FOUND HIMSELF INSIDE THE CABIN! HE LOOKED ABOUT...HALF-EXPECTING TO SEE...
HE'S DEAD! BRUTALLY, HORRIBLY MURDERED! AND I DID IT! I'M MAD! A HOMICIDAL MANIAC!
BENTLY RUSHED FROM THE LONELY CABIN..AND SPED AWAY IN HIS CAR...
I'VE GOT TO GET BACK TO THE CITY! NO ONE EXCEPT DIANE KNOWS I CAME TO THE CABIN! I'LL GO TO HER... TELL HER EVERYTHING! SHE'LL PROTECT ME! SHE LOVES ME! I...I...DON'T WANT TO BE PUT AWAY!
4

THE CAR ROARED INTO THE NIGHT... ITS HEADLIGHTS, LIKE TWO KNIVES, STABBING THROUGH THE BLACK...
ME... THE GREAT BRAIN-SURGEON... MAD! NO ONE MUST KNOW! I MUST RECOVER! I MUST GET WELL! DIANE CAN MAKE ME WELL!
ON...ON INTO THE DARKNESS ..THE CAR SPED! THE ENGINE HUMMED... ON ..ON! THEN...
WHA?
R-R-R-R-I-I-I-NG!
HIS APARTMENT! DOCTOR BENTLY WAS BACK IN HIS APARTMENT! AND THE PHONE WAS RINGING...
HELLO?
HELLO, BENTLY? THIS IS CARGILE AT THE HOSPITAL! GET OVER HERE IMMEDIATELY! IT'S AN EMERGENCY!!
AT THE HOSPITAL, A FEW MINUTES LATER...
...SOME GIRL'S BEEN BROUGHT IN! SHE'S BADLY HURT! BEEN ATTACKED! BRAIN INJURY... CONCUSSION AND COMPLICATIONS! NEEDS AN IMMEDIATE OPERATION... AND YOU'RE THE ONLY MAN WHO CAN DO IT!
I'LL PREPARE TO OPERATE AT ONCE...
BENTLY DONNED THE FAMILIAR WHITE COAT OF THE SURGEON AND BEGAN TO WASH UP...
I... I DON'T REMEMBER GETTING HOME! STRANGE! DID I HAVE ANOTHER ATTACK?
A NURSE STEPPED FORWARD WITH STERILIZED RUBBER GLOVES...
EVERYTHING IS READY IN THE OPERATING ROOM, DOCTOR! THE PATIENT IS UNDER THE ANESTHETIC! PULSE... 106. BREATHING...SHALLOW!
WE MUST HURRY!
RALPH BENTLY STEPPED INTO THE OPERATING ROOM... THE SAME ONE INTO WHICH HE HAD STEPPED SO MANY TIMES BEFORE!
THIS IS THE GIRL, DOCTOR! SHE'S BEEN UNCONSCIOUS SINCE THEY BROUGHT HER IN...
DIANE!
5


DIANE! THEN I DID GO TO YOUR PLACE! I DID THIS TO YOU! I TRIED TO MURDER YOU! AND NOW... I MUST TRY TO SAVE YOUR LIFE!
BUT... WHAT IF I HAVE ANOTHER ATTACK WHILE I'M OPERATING? I MIGHT KILL YOU!
HURRY, DOCTOR!
I'VE GOT TO TRY! I MUST SAVE YOU! I LOVE YOU! NOTHING ELSE MATTERS!
DOCTOR! SHE'S SINKING FAST!
SWIFTLY, HIS DEFT FINGERS REACHED FOR INSTRUMENT AFTER INSTRUMENT...
...MUST HURRY... FEEL GROGGY... ANOTHER ATTACK COMING ON! MUST FINISH... BEFORE...
SKILLED HANDS.. NOW SHAKING FROM THE EFFORT OF FIGHTING OFF THE APPROACHING DARKNESS... REACHED THE VITAL POINT, AND RELIEVED THE FATAL PRESSURE! THEN...
IF I CAN.. JUST HOLD OFF.. THE ATTACK... I COULD FINISH THE OPERATION.. AND GET AWAY... BUT, IT... IT'S TOO RISKY! I... I MIGHT DO SOMETHING TO DIANE!
DOCTOR, WHAT'S WRONG?
GARGILE! TAKE OVER! I... I CAN'T FINISH!
SURELY, DOCTOR BENTLY!
DOCTOR RALPH BENTLY TORE FROM THE OPERATING ROOM... DOWN A LONG CORRIDOR . TO AN OPEN BALCONY...
GOT TO DESTROY MYSELF... BEFORE I DESTROY OTHERS!
STOP HIM!
THE SCREAM OF A DYING MAN ECHOED THROUGH THE STREETS AS THE DOCTOR PLUNGED FIFTEEN FLOORS INTO HIS FINAL DARKNESS,
THE END
6

PERFECT MURDER!

Flenson twisted the knob in his powerful fingers and the door swung open noiselessly. He stalked into the wood-panelled room, his eyes fastening immediately on the old man huddled over the ornate desk directly opposite him. A pen began to slide out of the old man's hand and the desk lamp caught the glint of terror in his eyes.

"Kind of surprised to see me, Schumacher?" Flenson rasped, his impressive bulk balanced on his thick hands as he leaned across the desk and peered intently at his partner. "Didn't think I'd find out so soon about your little business manipulation, eh?"

Schumacher raised his thin veined hand in protest, but all he could manage was an inaudible mumble.

"Don't try to snow me under, you crummy thief!" Flenson roared. "Thought you'd skip out and leave me with a mountain of Schumacher-Flenson Company debts to pay off, didn't you? Well, I'm back . . . to spike your plans!"

Once again Flenson leaned across the desk and his hand fastened over the sheet of paper in front of the old man. His fierce eyes danced as he read the curt note, and a grotesque smile suddenly transformed his rugged face. "Hah!" Flenson bellowed, "a suicide note, eh?" You were all set to get out from under this bankruptcy, weren't you?"

Schumacher's eyes were glassy with fear as he watched his huge partner come around the desk toward him.

"You're going to commit suicide as far as the rest of the world knows," Flenson hissed, "but just between the two of *us* . . . it's going to be MURDER!"

The old man sat bolt upright, his thin hand clutching his chest. "F-Flenson," he gasped, "my h-heart . . . g-get my pills . . . I n-need . . ." He tried to get out of his chair but Flenson pushed him back roughly.

"Sit there, Schumacher," he said, "and help me commit my perfect murder!"

The old man gasped twice, and then his head fell forward on his chest. He was dead.

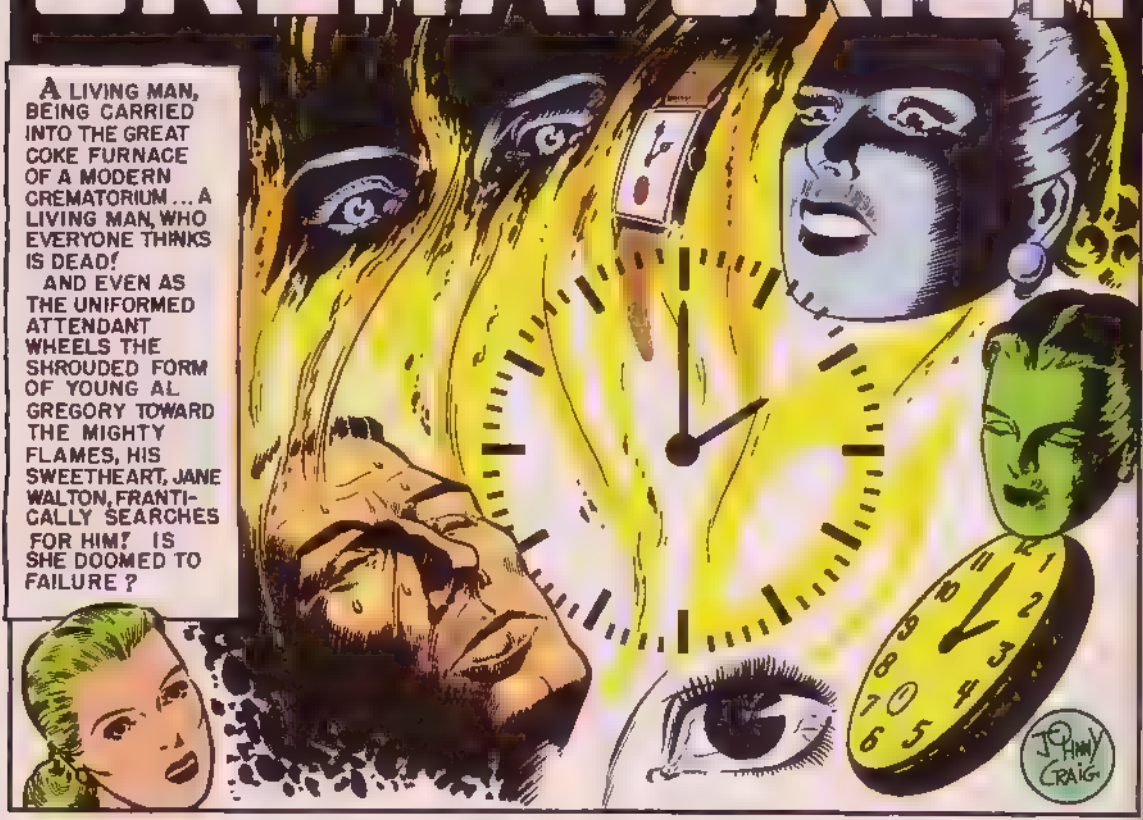
Flenson folded the suicide note and tucked it into the envelope near the old man's hand. He raised it to his face and his tongue flicked out at the gummed flap. Then Flenson pressed it closed.

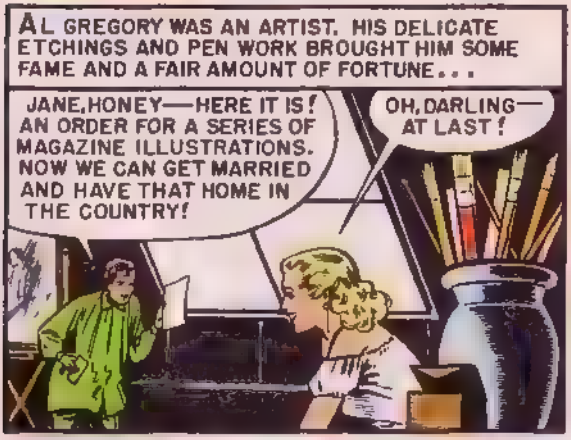
"Signed, sealed and ready for delivery," he said to the corpse. But an expression of surprise intermingled with pain suddenly crossed his face. The big man stumbled and fell across the desk.

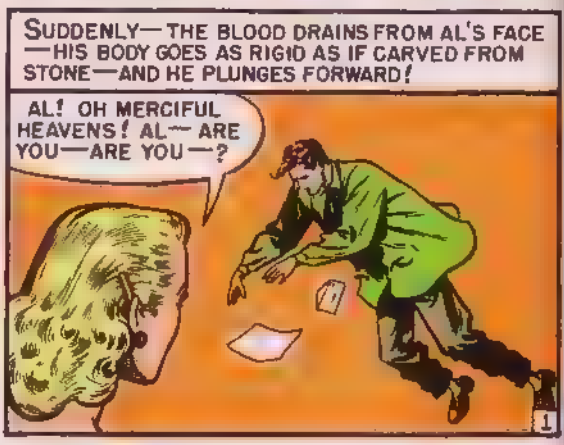
"T-the envelope," he gasped, unable to keep himself from sliding to the floor. "I-It's *poisoned!* T-That's how . . . the old crook was going to . . . kill himself! B-But I. . . . I kept him from using it!"

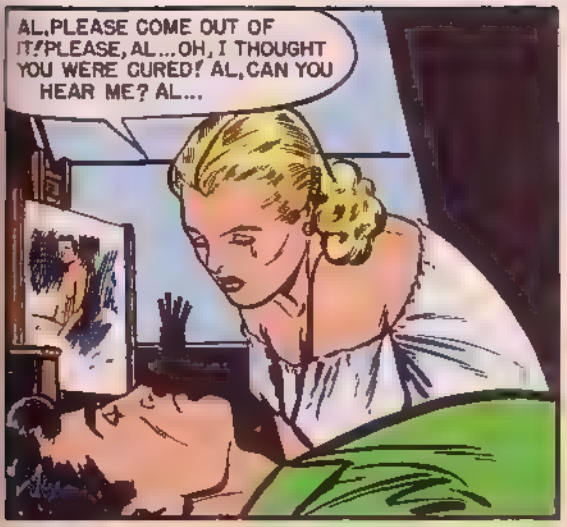
The big body sprawled across the carpet under the desk. Schumacher-Flenson Company was out of business.

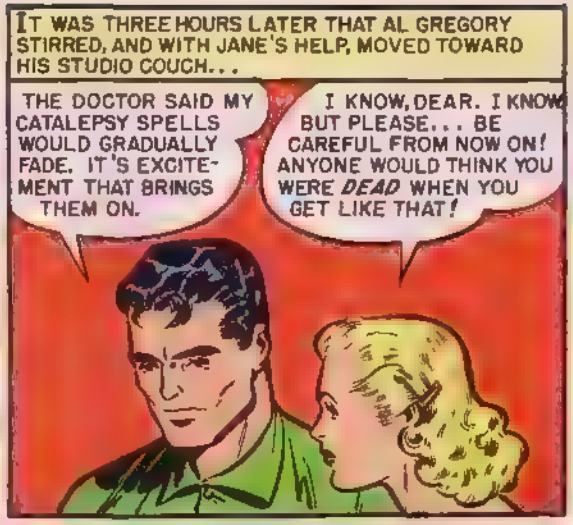
THE CORPSE IN THE CREMATORIUM

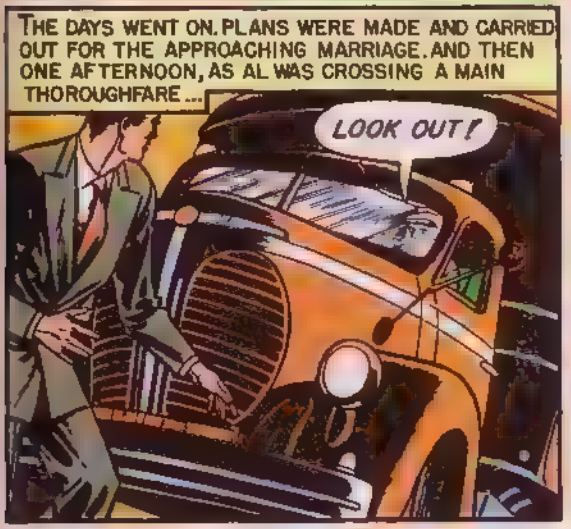

A LIVING MAN, BEING CARRIED INTO THE GREAT COKE FURNACE OF A MODERN CREMATORIUM... A LIVING MAN, WHO EVERYONE THINKS IS DEAD!
AND EVEN AS THE UNIFORMED ATTENDANT WHEELS THE SHROUDED FORM OF YOUNG AL GREGORY TOWARD THE MIGHTY FLAMES, HIS SWEETHEART, JANE WALTON, FRANTICALLY SEARCHES FOR HIM! IS SHE DOOMED TO FAILURE?
JOHNNY CRAIG


AL GREGORY WAS AN ARTIST. HIS DELICATE ETCHINGS AND PEN WORK BROUGHT HIM SOME FAME AND A FAIR AMOUNT OF FORTUNE...
JANE, HONEY—HERE IT IS! AN ORDER FOR A SERIES OF MAGAZINE ILLUSTRATIONS. NOW WE CAN GET MARRIED AND HAVE THAT HOME IN THE COUNTRY!
OH, DARLING—AT LAST!


SUDDENLY—THE BLOOD DRAINS FROM AL'S FACE—HIS BODY GOES AS RIGID AS IF CARVED FROM STONE—AND HE PLUNGES FORWARD!
AL! OH MERCIFUL HEAVENS! AL—ARE YOU—ARE YOU—?
1

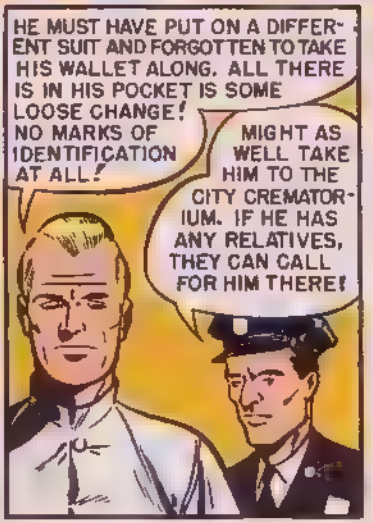

AL, PLEASE COME OUT OF IT! PLEASE, AL... OH, I THOUGHT YOU WERE CURED! AL, CAN YOU HEAR ME? AL...

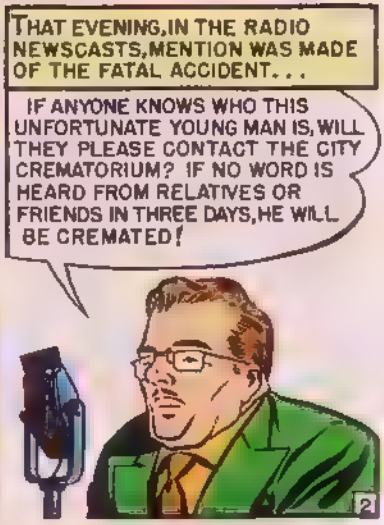

IT WAS THREE HOURS LATER THAT AL GREGORY STIRRED, AND WITH JANE'S HELP, MOVED TOWARD HIS STUDIO COUCH...
THE DOCTOR SAID MY CATALEPSY SPELLS WOULD GRADUALLY FADE. IT'S EXCITEMENT THAT BRINGS THEM ON.
I KNOW, DEAR. I KNOW BUT PLEASE... BE CAREFUL FROM NOW ON! ANYONE WOULD THINK YOU WERE DEAD WHEN YOU GET LIKE THAT!


THE DAYS WENT ON. PLANS WERE MADE AND CARRIED OUT FOR THE APPROACHING MARRIAGE. AND THEN ONE AFTERNOON, AS AL WAS CROSSING A MAIN THOROUGHFARE...
LOOK OUT!

TORTURED BRAKES SCREECHED! A GIRL'S SHRILL SCREAM ROSE ABOVE THE TRAFFIC SOUNDS, PARALYZING EVERYONE! AL FELL GROUNDWARD — WHITE, STIFF — SEEMINGLY DEAD!

HE'S DEAD, ALL RIGHT. MUST HAVE HAD A WEAK HEART. THE TRUCK NEVER TOUCHED HIM, BUT HIS HEART JUST STOPPED BEATING!

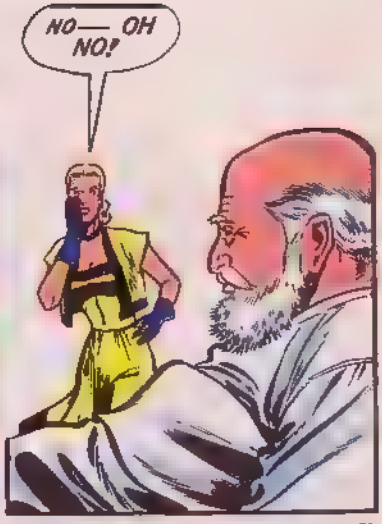

HE MUST HAVE PUT ON A DIFFERENT SUIT AND FORGOTTEN TO TAKE HIS WALLET ALONG. ALL THERE IS IN HIS POCKET IS SOME LOOSE CHANGE! NO MARKS OF IDENTIFICATION AT ALL!
MIGHT AS WELL TAKE HIM TO THE CITY CREMATORIUM. IF HE HAS ANY RELATIVES, THEY CAN CALL FOR HIM THERE!

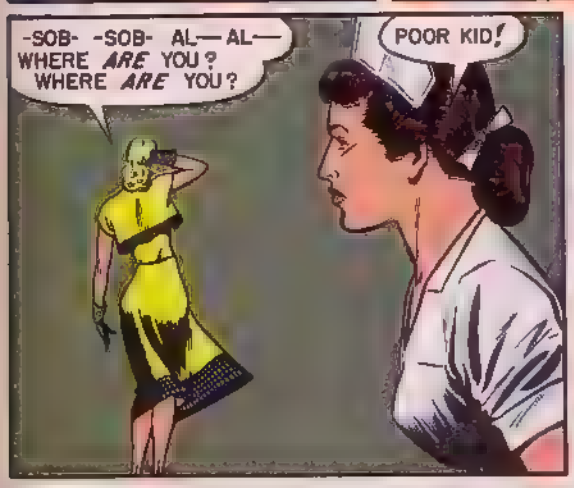

THAT EVENING, IN THE RADIO NEWSCASTS, MENTION WAS MADE OF THE FATAL ACCIDENT...
IF ANYONE KNOWS WHO THIS UNFORTUNATE YOUNG MAN IS, WILL THEY PLEASE CONTACT THE CITY CREMATORIUM? IF NO WORD IS HEARD FROM RELATIVES OR FRIENDS IN THREE DAYS, HE WILL BE CREMATED!

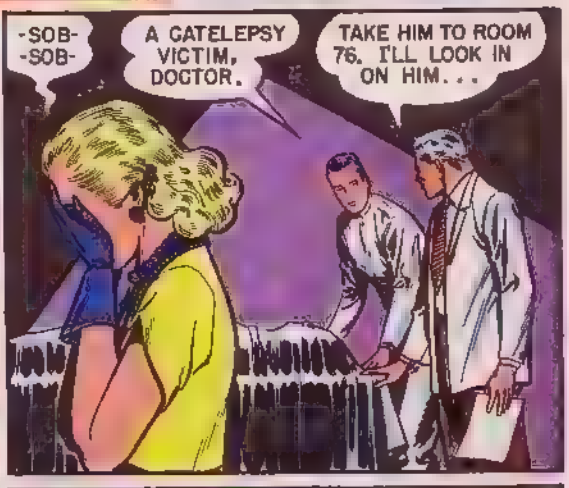
AT THAT MOMENT, JANE WALTON WAS VISITING RELATIVES SOME MILES FROM THE CITY...
I USUALLY TURN ON THE NEWS ANNOUNCERS AT THIS TIME!
OH, DARLING, NOT TONIGHT! I'M SO FILLED WITH HAPPINESS, I JUST WANT TO TELL YOU ALL ABOUT MY DARLING AL...
JANE SPENT THE NIGHT OUT OF TOWN...
HE SOUNDS LIKE A PERFECT DEAR.
OH, HE IS! RIGHT NOW HE'S FINISHING UP THAT ILLUSTRATION WORK SO WE CAN TAKE AN EXTRA WEEK ON OUR HONEYMOON! I HOPE HE DOESN'T OVERTAX HIS STRENGTH...
BUT —NEXT DAY IN THE CITY...
HE DIDN'T COME HOME AT ALL LAST NIGHT. HMMPFFF! PROBABLY OUT HAVING A GOOD TIME. I DON'T TRUST THESE MEN.
OH, AL ISN'T LIKE THAT! HE SAID HE'D BE HERE, THOUGH— WORKING...
AL HASN'T BEEN IN TO YOUR OFFICE FOR THREE DAYS? OH... THANK YOU!
I-I'M GETTING SCA-SCARED! HE HASN'T BEEN IN TO ANY OF THE EDITORIAL OFFICES THAT USE HIS PICTURES. HE HAS NO RELATIVES IN THIS PART OF THE COUNTRY! HE HAS NO OTHER PLACE TO GO BUT THIS STUDIO!
WHAT HAPPENED?
IS THERE ANOTHER WOMAN?
WHERE IS HE?
IS HE HURT?
IT WAS A FRANTIC JANE THAT RAN INTO THE INFORMATION BUREAU OF THE METROPOLITAN DAILY NEWSPAPER...
HE COULDN'T DISAPPEAR WITHOUT LEAVING SOME TRACE! YOU HAVE TO HELP ME! YOU HAVE TO!
WE'LL CHECK THE RECENT PAPERS, MA'AM!
3

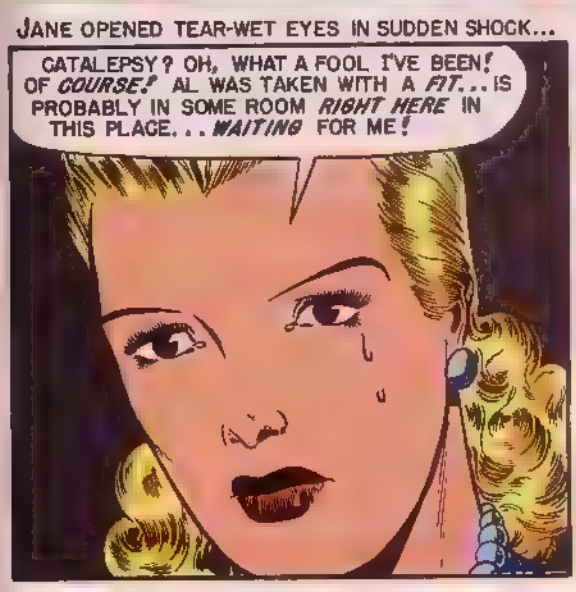
THERE WAS AN AMNESIA VICTIM TAKEN TO CITY HOSPITAL. HE DOESN'T KNOW HIS NAME...
YES, YES! THAT MUST BE AL! OH, THANK YOU SO MUCH...

AT THE HOSPITAL, AN HOUR LATER...
RIGHT THIS WAY, PLEASE.
OH, I HOPE IT'S AL! I HOPE IT IS...THAT HE WILL RECOGNIZE ME...


NO— OH NO!


-SOB- -SOB- AL— AL— WHERE ARE YOU? WHERE ARE YOU?
POOR KID!


-SOB- -SOB-
A CATELEPSY VICTIM, DOCTOR.
TAKE HIM TO ROOM 76. I'LL LOOK IN ON HIM...


JANE OPENED TEAR-WET EYES IN SUDDEN SHOCK...
CATALEPSY? OH, WHAT A FOOL I'VE BEEN! OF COURSE! AL WAS TAKEN WITH A FIT... IS PROBABLY IN SOME ROOM RIGHT HERE IN THIS PLACE... WAITING FOR ME!

NO, NO ONE BY THAT NAME IS REGISTERED HERE. I'M SORRY.
SU-SUPPOSE...SUPPOSE HE WAS TAKEN WITH A FIT... AND... AND THEY THOUGHT HE WAS— DEAD?

IT WAS DUSK WHEN JANE RAN INTO THE FILE DEPARTMENT OF THE LOCAL POLICE BUREAU...
IF — IF HE'S BEEN REPORTED DEAD... THERE MIGHT BE A CHANCE... TO REVIVE HIM... IF I CAN FIND HIM...
SORRY, LADY. ALL OUR FILES ARE LOCKED UP AT FIVE O'CLOCK. THE OFFICE IS CLOSED...
BUT THIS IS AN EMERGENCY! A FRIEND OF MINE IS SUBJECT TO CATALEPTIC FITS! HE MIGHT BE REPORTED DEAD! I——
I COULDN'T OPEN THE FILES IF I WANTED TO. THE KEY CLERK HAS GONE HOME. YOU'D NEED A COURT ORDER TO OPEN THEM AT THIS TIME. AND TO GET THAT, YOU'D HAVE TO HAVE SOME PROOF...
I SEE...
STARING BLINDLY AHEAD, JANE WALKED THE STREETS FAR INTO THE NIGHT. HER MIND, SHOCKED AND BLASTED BY AL'S DISAPPEARANCE, REFUSED TO THINK...
TWO DAYS NOW... HE HASN'T BEEN HOME... AND I'VE BEEN TO THE NEWSPAPERS... THE HOSPITALS... THE POLICE... WHAT'S LEFT? WHERE CAN I GO FOR HELP?
IT WAS MORNING WHEN JANE STAGGERED HOME. AS SHE SWAYED OVER THE GAS RANGE, HER EYELIDS CLOSED HEAVILY...
GOT TO... STAY AWAKE... SEE THE POLICE CLERK AGAIN... CHECK ALL REPORTS OF PEOPLE'S DEATHS... GOT TO... CAN'T SLEEP YET... NOT YET...
THIS COFFEE WILL KEEP ME GOING... WILL KEEP ME AWAKE... ALL DAY...
AT TEN O'CLOCK THAT MORNING——
NOBODY BY THE NAME OF GREGORY HAS DIED IN THIS LAST YEAR, LADY.
OHHH, THANK HEAVENS!
5

HOWEVER, MAYBE HE WAS PICKED UP WITHOUT ANY IDENTIFICATION ON HIM!

OH, *NO!* HE ALWAYS CARRIES HIS WALLET WITH HIM! THAT HAS HIS *NAME* IN IT. I THINK I'LL CHECK WITH LOCAL DOCTORS.

FROM STREET TO STREET, SOMETIMES USING A TELEPHONE, JANE CHECKED WITH ALL THE DOCTORS...

I'M SORRY. WE HAVE HAD NO PATIENT BY THAT NAME.

I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT HAPPENED! IT'S ALMOST AS IF THE EARTH OPENED UP AND SWALLOWED HIM.

DR. J.D. KRANS

ANOTHER LOOK AT HOSPITAL RECORDS...

NO ALBERT GREGORY! SORRY...

SORRY! NO AL GREGORY! NO RECORD! SORRY! NO NOT HERE! NO! SORRY! NOT HERE NO NEVER HEARD OF HIM SORRY! NO NO RECORD NO

DAZED, SICK, AND HALF-ASLEEP AS SHE STUMBLED INTO AL'S STUDIO, JANE STARED DOWN AT—HIS WALLET!

OH MY *HEAVENS!* HE *DIDN'T* TAKE HIS WALLET WITH HIM—THEN HOW WOULD ANYONE KNOW WHO HE WAS? HE MIGHT BE SICK .HURT...EVEN *DEAD*... OR IN A CATALEPTIC FIT... AND BE BURIED—*UNIDENTIFIED!*

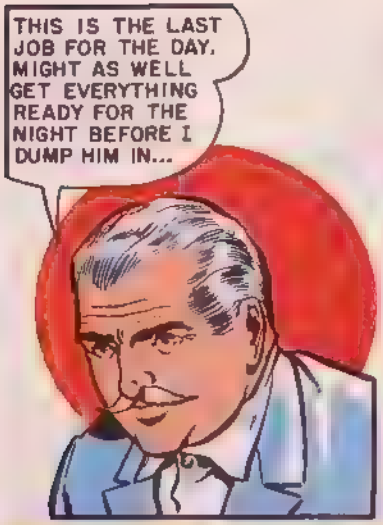
IDENTIFICATION

GOT TO—GO TO THE MORGUE—SEE IF HIS BODY IS THERE! MAYBE HE'S STILL IN THE FIT! THEY LAST FOR *DAYS* SOMETIMES...

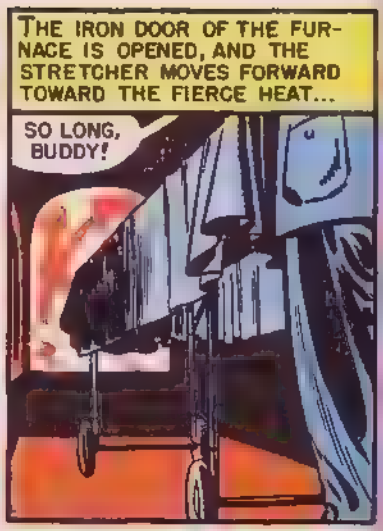
BUT IN THE MORGUE ATTACHED TO THE CREMATORY...

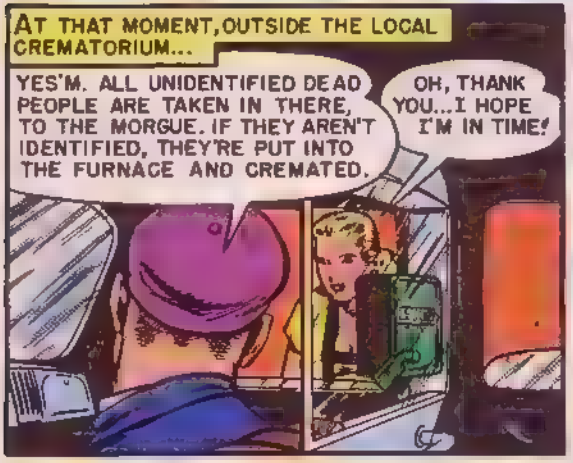
GUESS THIS FELLA HAS NO RELATIVES. MIGHT AS WELL MOVE HIM DOWN TO THE FURNACE ROOM, JIM.

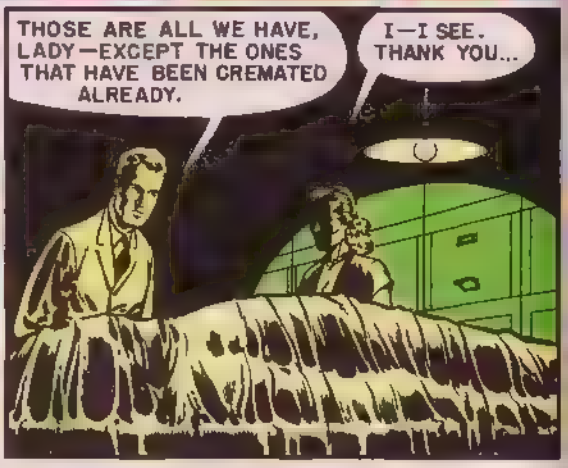
GUESS SO. THE THREE DAYS ARE UP!

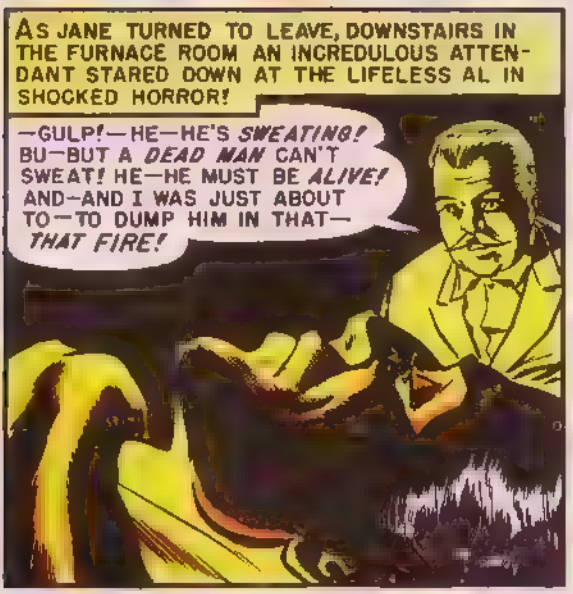

THIS IS THE LAST JOB FOR THE DAY. MIGHT AS WELL GET EVERYTHING READY FOR THE NIGHT BEFORE I DUMP HIM IN...

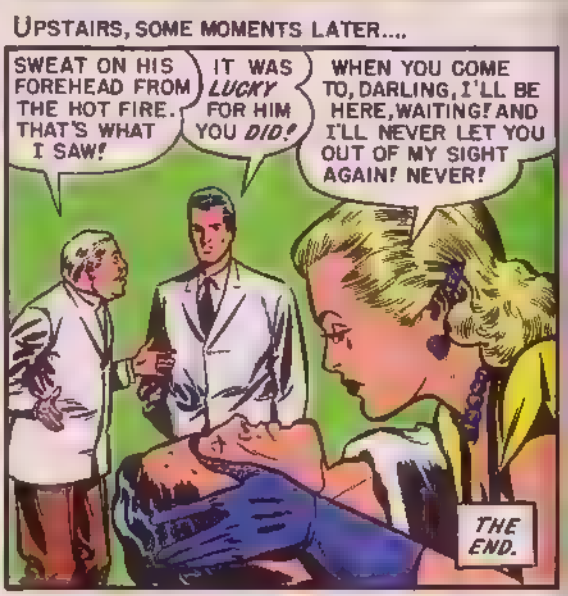
I'LL DISCONNECT THE TELEPHONE AND TURN OFF ALL THE LIGHTS BUT THE EMERGENCY LIGHT. THEN WHEN I FINISH WITH HIM, I CAN GO HOME!


THE IRON DOOR OF THE FURNACE IS OPENED, AND THE STRETCHER MOVES FORWARD TOWARD THE FIERCE HEAT...
SO LONG, BUDDY!

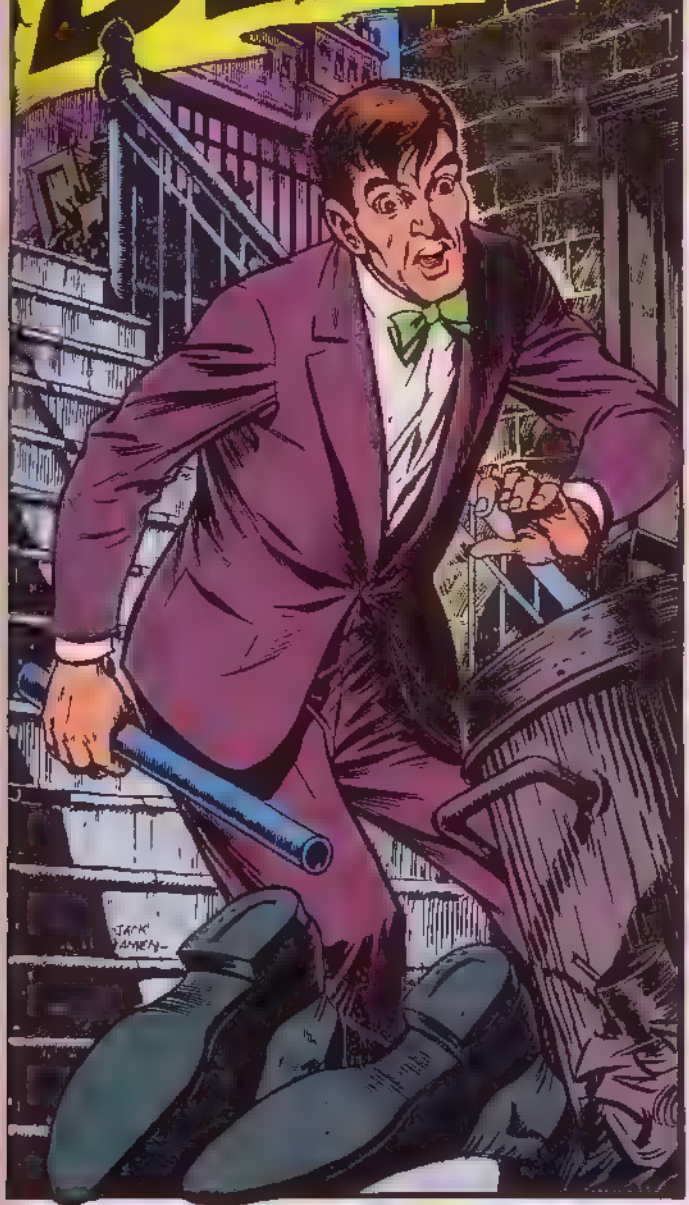

AT THAT MOMENT, OUTSIDE THE LOCAL CREMATORIUM...
YES'M. ALL UNIDENTIFIED DEAD PEOPLE ARE TAKEN IN THERE, TO THE MORGUE. IF THEY AREN'T IDENTIFIED, THEY'RE PUT INTO THE FURNACE AND CREMATED.
OH, THANK YOU...I HOPE I'M IN TIME!


THOSE ARE ALL WE HAVE, LADY—EXCEPT THE ONES THAT HAVE BEEN CREMATED ALREADY.
I—I SEE. THANK YOU...


AS JANE TURNED TO LEAVE, DOWNSTAIRS IN THE FURNACE ROOM AN INCREDULOUS ATTENDANT STARED DOWN AT THE LIFELESS AL IN SHOCKED HORROR!
—GULP!—HE—HE'S SWEATING! BU—BUT A DEAD MAN CAN'T SWEAT! HE—HE MUST BE ALIVE! AND—AND I WAS JUST ABOUT TO—TO DUMP HIM IN THAT—THAT FIRE!

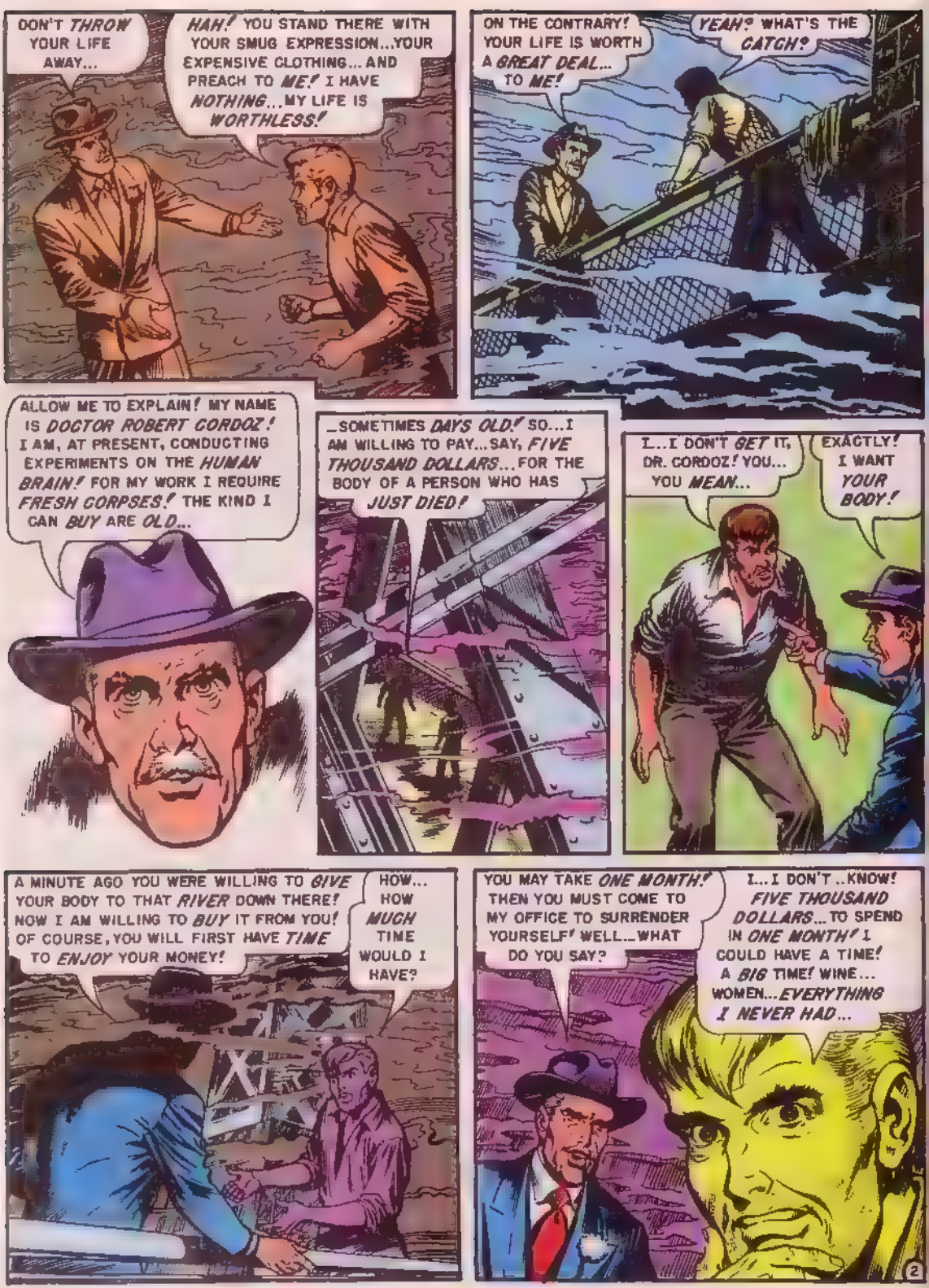

UPSTAIRS, SOME MOMENTS LATER....
SWEAT ON HIS FOREHEAD FROM THE HOT FIRE. THAT'S WHAT I SAW!
IT WAS LUCKY FOR HIM YOU DID!
WHEN YOU COME TO, DARLING, I'LL BE HERE, WAITING! AND I'LL NEVER LET YOU OUT OF MY SIGHT AGAIN! NEVER!
THE END.

CONTRACT FOR DEATH



IT WAS AFTER MIDNIGHT! THE FOG WAS THICK AND HOVERED LIKE A BLANKET OVER THE BRIDGE! A FIGURE...A MAN... EMERGED FROM THE GRAY GLOOM, LOOKED ABOUT, AND THEN STEPPED TO THE RAIL! HE REMOVED HIS WORN AND TATTERED COAT, THEN ...

SUDDENLY, FROM OUT OF THE MIST, A SECOND FIGURE APPEARED! HE WAS WELL-DRESSED...PROSPEROUS LOOKING!

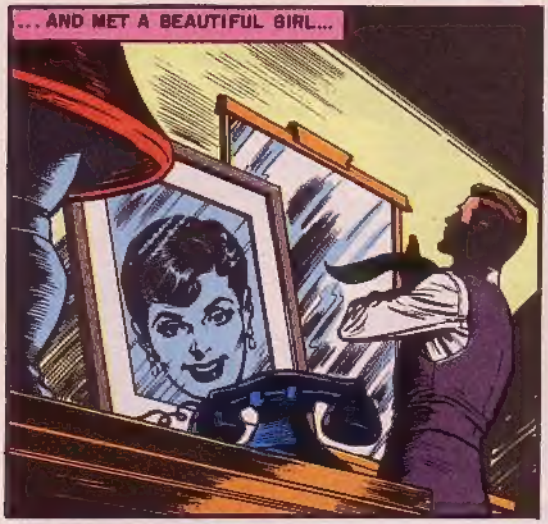

DON'T THROW YOUR LIFE AWAY...
HAH! YOU STAND THERE WITH YOUR SMUG EXPRESSION...YOUR EXPENSIVE CLOTHING... AND PREACH TO ME! I HAVE NOTHING...MY LIFE IS WORTHLESS!
ON THE CONTRARY! YOUR LIFE IS WORTH A GREAT DEAL... TO ME!
YEAH? WHAT'S THE CATCH?
ALLOW ME TO EXPLAIN! MY NAME IS DOCTOR ROBERT CORDOZ! I AM, AT PRESENT, CONDUCTING EXPERIMENTS ON THE HUMAN BRAIN! FOR MY WORK I REQUIRE FRESH CORPSES! THE KIND I CAN BUY ARE OLD...
...SOMETIMES DAYS OLD! SO...I AM WILLING TO PAY...SAY, FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS...FOR THE BODY OF A PERSON WHO HAS JUST DIED!
I...I DON'T GET IT, DR. CORDOZ! YOU... YOU MEAN...
EXACTLY! I WANT YOUR BODY!
A MINUTE AGO YOU WERE WILLING TO GIVE YOUR BODY TO THAT RIVER DOWN THERE! NOW I AM WILLING TO BUY IT FROM YOU! OF COURSE, YOU WILL FIRST HAVE TIME TO ENJOY YOUR MONEY!
HOW... HOW MUCH TIME WOULD I HAVE?
YOU MAY TAKE ONE MONTH! THEN YOU MUST COME TO MY OFFICE TO SURRENDER YOURSELF! WELL...WHAT DO YOU SAY?
I...I DON'T..KNOW! FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS...TO SPEND IN ONE MONTH! I COULD HAVE A TIME! A BIG TIME! WINE... WOMEN...EVERYTHING I NEVER HAD...
2

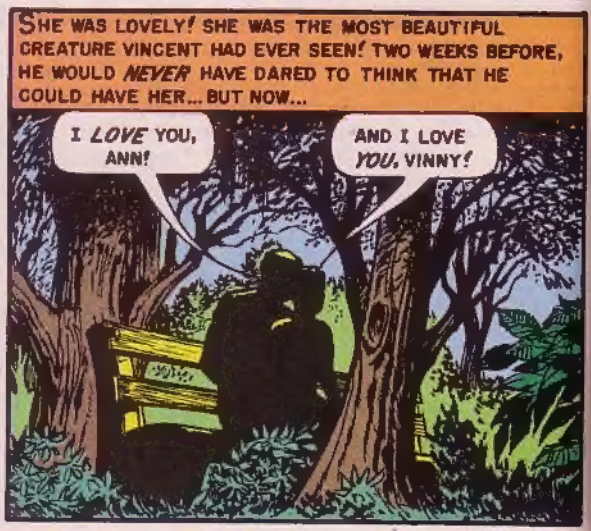
I'LL DO IT!
GOOD! JUST SIGN THIS PAPER AND I'LL GIVE YOU THE MONEY!
PAPER? WHAT IS IT?
IT IS YOUR SUICIDE NOTE! DATED ONE MONTH FROM TONIGHT!
THERE!
FINE! HERE IS THE MONEY, AND HERE IS MY CARD! I WILL SEE YOU IN ONE MONTH! GOODBYE FOR NOW... HAVE FUN!
DOCTOR CORDOZ VANISHED INTO THE FOG, AND THE SHABBILY DRESSED ONE...VINCENT FENTON...WATCHED HIM GO....
FIVE GRAND! FIVE GRAND... AND ONE MONTH TO BLOW IT IN! WHAT A BREAK! WHAT A BREAK!
STUFFING THE GREEN BILLS INTO A POCKET OF HIS RAGGED SUIT, VINCENT FENTON MADE HIS WAY TO AN ALL-NIGHT BARBER SHOP...
YES, SIR?
GIMME THE WORKS! SHAVE... HAIRCUT... MANICURE..
AND THE FOLLOWING MORNING ..
I HOPE YOU'LL BE VERY HAPPY WITH YOUR NEW WARDROBE, MR. FENTON! CALL AGAIN, SIR!
THANKS! I WILL!
THAT AFTERNOON, VINCENT FENTON HIRED A CAR .A SHINY NEW CONVERTIBLE ..
THIS IS THE KIND OF BUS I'VE ALWAYS WANTED!

IN THE WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, VINCENT DID EVERYTHING HE HAD EVER DREAMED ABOUT! HE SPLURGED AT RACETRACKS...
C'MON, MOUNTAIN KING!

REVELED AT LAVISH NIGHTCLUBS...

ATTENDED SHOWS...


... AND MET A BEAUTIFUL GIRL...


SHE WAS LOVELY! SHE WAS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL CREATURE VINCENT HAD EVER SEEN! TWO WEEKS BEFORE, HE WOULD NEVER HAVE DARED TO THINK THAT HE COULD HAVE HER... BUT NOW...
I LOVE YOU, ANN!
AND I LOVE YOU, VINNY!

THE DAYS PASSED AND THE TIME DREW NEAR FOR THE EXECUTION OF THE AGREEMENT VINCENT HAD MADE WITH DOCTOR GORDOZ...
WHAT CAN I DO? WHAT CAN I DO?
VINNY, DEAREST! YOU LOOK TROUBLED! IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG?

SWEET, BEAUTIFUL ANN! SHE HAD SHOWN VINCENT A NEW MEANING TO LIFE! SHE HAD SHOWN HIM LOVE... AND HE DIDN'T WANT TO GIVE IT UP...NOW!
WHY N-NO, ANN! THERE'S NOTHING WRONG!

THAT NIGHT, AFTER HE LEFT ANN, VINCENT WENT TO SEE DOCTOR CORDOZ...
AH, VINCENT, MY BOY! BUT WHAT BRINGS YOU TO SEE ME TONIGHT! YOU STILL HAVE UNTIL TOMORROW AT MIDNIGHT!
DOCTOR! I WANT YOU TO RELEASE ME FROM MY BARGAIN WITH YOU!
SO? AND WHAT HAS BROUGHT ABOUT THIS CHANGE OF HEART?
IT'S A GIRL! I... I'M IN LOVE WITH HER!
AND THE MONEY I PAID YOU FOR YOUR BODY? THE FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS! CAN YOU RETURN IT?
I HAVE SIX HUNDRED DOLLARS LEFT! HERE! TAKE IT! AS FOR THE REST... I'LL WORK! I'LL PAY YOU BACK EVERY PENNY!
DON'T BE A FOOL, FENTON! WE MADE A DEAL! YOU SPENT MY MONEY...YOU MUST FULFILL YOUR END OF THE BARGAIN!
AND WHAT IF I REFUSE?
HAVEN'T YOU FORGOTTEN SOMETHING, MR. FENTON? THE NOTE! THE SUICIDE NOTE THAT YOU SIGNED! IF YOU FAIL TO DELIVER WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN PAID FOR, I WILL COLLECT! THE NOTE WILL BE A PERFECT ALIBI!
I PAID YOU FOR A BODY... AND YOU MUST PROVIDE ME WITH A BODY! OF COURSE IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE YOURS...
BUT...I'D I'D HAVE TO...
...MURDER SOMEONE!
EXACTLY! THINK IT OVER, FENTON! IT'S YOU...OR SOMEONE ELSE!
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VINCENT LEFT DOCTOR CORDOZ' OFFICE IN A DAZE! ALL THAT NIGHT HE TOSSED AND TURNED! HE COULDN'T SLEEP...

I *CAN'T!* I'M NO *MURDERER!* I...I...COULDN'T KILL ANYONE! I...I..

THE NEXT NIGHT FOUND HIM WALKING THE STREETS! HE WAS ALMOST MAD WITH ANXIETY AND FEAR! THE TIME WAS GROWING NEAR! HALF-AN-HOUR MORE...

I DON'T WANT TO DIE! NOT *NOW!* NOT ANYMORE! *ANN!* I'LL LOSE HER! I WANT TO *LIVE!* I'VE...*GOT* TO DO IT! IT'S LIKE DOCTOR CORDOZ SAID...*ME,* OR... OR...HIM...

VINCENT LOOKED AROUND! THE STREET WAS DESERTED...EXCEPT FOR THE LONE FIGURE FAR BEHIND HIM! HE SLIPPED INTO A DARK DOORWAY AND WAITED...

THIS LENGTH OF PIPE OUGHT TO DO NICELY...

HALF-CRAZED WITH DESIRE FOR HIS OWN SELF-PRESERVATION, VINCENT SPRUNG FROM HIS HIDING PLACE AND STRUCK AT HIS VICTIM AGAIN AND AGAIN UNTIL HIS ARM ACHED...

UGH! HIS FACE IS A *BLOODY PULP!*

SOMEHOW, ALTHOUGH IT WAS LIKE A HIDEOUS NIGHTMARE, VINCENT MANAGED TO DRAG THE BODY OF HIS VICTIM TO DOCTOR CORDOZ' DOOR.....

THANK GOODNESS THE STREET IS DESERTED!

AS HE RANG THE BELL, A GROUP OF REVELERS ROUNDED THE CORNER...

♪ SHWEET AH-DO-LINE! MY AH-DO-LINE ♪

...SOMEONE... COMING!

VINCENT DROPPED THE BODY ON THE STOOP AND RAN...

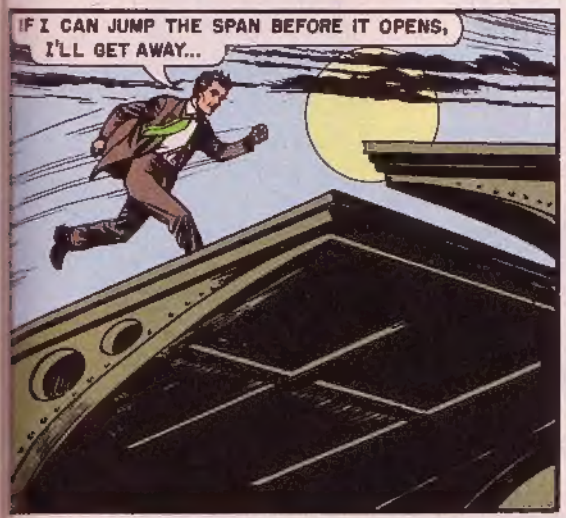
SHAY! WHAT'S HE SO SCARED OF?

LOOK! SHOMEBODY SHLEEPIN' ON'A STOOP!

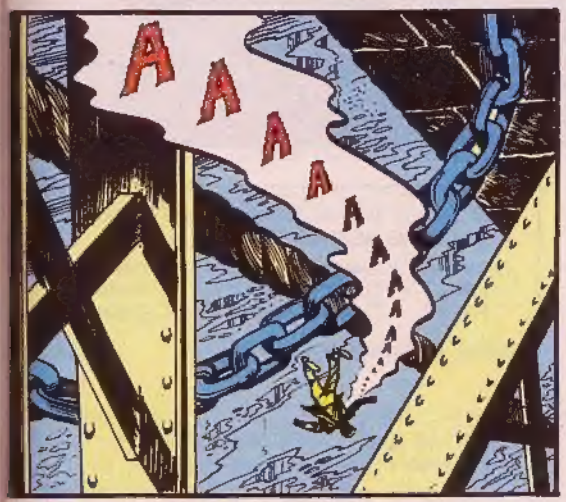
WHAT THE...! THIS GUY'S DEAD!
GET HIM! HE'S A MURDERER!
HELP! POLICE!

AS VINCENT RAN, HE COULD HEAR THE SHOUTS AND RUNNING OF HIS PURSUERS...
GOT TO GET AWAY! GOT TO HIDE...

AS VINCENT APPROACHED THE BRIDGE...THE BRIDGE ON WHICH HE HAD FIRST MET THE DOCTOR...
THE BARRIER'S COMING DOWN! THIS IS MY CHANCE!
HEY, THERE...


IF I CAN JUMP THE SPAN BEFORE IT OPENS, I'LL GET AWAY...

...AND THEY'LL NEVER...OH...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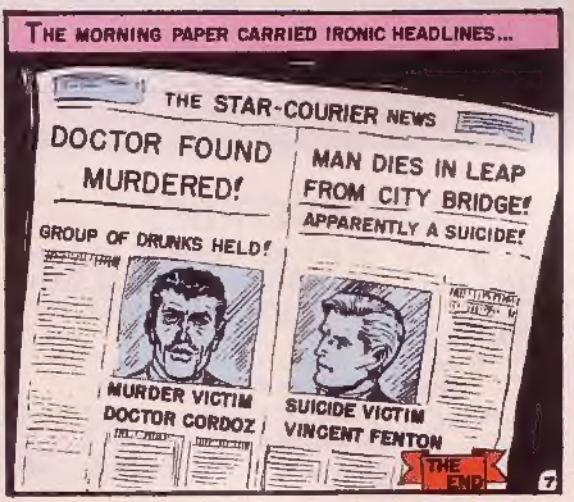
THE MORNING PAPER CARRIED IRONIC HEADLINES...
THE STAR-COURIER NEWS
DOCTOR FOUND MURDERED!
GROUP OF DRUNKS HELD!
MURDER VICTIM DOCTOR CORDOZ
MAN DIES IN LEAP FROM CITY BRIDGE!
APPARENTLY A SUICIDE!
SUICIDE VICTIM VINCENT FENTON
THE END